



Willie "Hobo" David Jackson

November 6, 1944 - January 6, 2022

Willie David Jackson was born November 6, 1944 to the late Annie Pearl Sellers and Hezekiah

Jackson in Hayneville, a small town in Lowndes County Alabama. He is one of nine siblings, six

girls and three boys. The family moved to the city of Birmingham when Willie was a young boy.

He attended public schools in Birmingham. It was in elementary school where he received the

infamous nickname of "Hobo." As the story goes, the teacher called on Willie to spell the word

hobo in a class spelling bee. Consequently, he was teased by his classmates who started calling

him Hobo and thus, the nickname stuck no matter how hard he tried to get rid of it!

Willie loved sports and played basketball, football and ran track at Ullman High School. He and

three other natives of Birmingham were recruited to play basketball at Morehead State University in Kentucky. He played basketball there from 1965-69. Willie is commonly regarded

as one of the most outstanding athletes to ever wear an Eagle uniform. He was inducted into the

Morehead Hall of Fame for Men's Basketball in 2008. It was at Morehead that Willie accepted

Christ as his Lord and Savior and was baptized at the Baptist Church.

Willie graduated from Morehead in 1970. He received a B.A. degree in Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Upon graduating, he had the awesome experience of trying out with

the Washington Bullets and the Kentucky Colonels professional basketball teams.

However, he

was not selected by either of the teams. He then moved to Louisville, Kentucky and began a

teaching and coaching career at Harvey C. Russell Junior High School in the Louisville Public School System. Several years later, he accepted a teaching and coaching position at the former Bishop David Catholic High School. He was eventually hired by the Jefferson County Public School System and began teaching and coaching. He earned a M. A. of Education degree in Exceptional Child Education from the University of Louisville in 1999 which certified him to teach special education classes in addition to health and physical education. He worked at the following schools in JCPS: Waller-Williams Environmental School, Kammerer Middle School, Western High School and retired from Seneca High School in 2015. He coached the following sports throughout his career: football, girls' and boys' basketball, baseball, softball, golf and track. In addition to his career with the school system, Willie also was employed as a Recreation Supervisor with Metro Parks and worked in several community centers in Louisville. Willie was a dedicated and committed teacher. In 2008, The Louisville Defender Newspaper presented him The Professional Achievement Award "In Recognition Of Personal And Professional Commitment To Education." In 2014, Willie received the Hilliard Lyons Excellence Award In Recognition of Outstanding Teaching Performance. For many years, Willie was an active member in the Greater Louisville Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Willie was one of Seneca High School's multi-sport FCA huddle sponsors and encouraged a weekly FCA time for his girls' basketball teams each season. Willie and his wife, Shirley, were staple couples at annual FCA Coach Spouse Marriage Retreats and Coach Date Nights sponsored by the area FCA ministry. Willie was a former member of Hill Street Missionary Baptist Church where he was actively involved for many years. Rev. Horace C. Mitchell and Rev. Gregory F. Smith were pastors during that time. Rev. Smith officiated his marriage to Shirley Fuqua in 1985. He joined St. Stephen Church in 2007 under the leadership of Reverend Kevin W. Cosby, Senior

Pastor. He

immediately became a member of the Usher Ministry and joined Sunday School. He was an

active member of “God’s Faithful Servants” Sunday School Class. He also participated in many

of the Men’s Ministry activities and Marriage Ministry activities with his wife. Willie coached a

women’s softball team at Hill Street Baptist Church and facilitated recreation activities during

Vacation Bible School at Hill Street Baptist Church and St. Stephen Church.

Willie was initiated into the Louisville Alumni chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity in 1989 where he continued his legacy of service and mentoring youth in the community.

In his leisure time, Willie loved to play softball! He was a longtime member of the Jabali’s (which means “Rock” in Swahili) and O. G.’s men’s softball teams as well as many other

local

teams. He played positions on first base and in the outfield. He used to thrill the fans when he

knocked the ball out of the park and made a homerun. Willie was inducted into the Louisville

Metro Softball Hall of Fame in 1985 and was made an Honorary Kentucky Colonel by Governor

Martha Layne Collins.

Willie is a former member of the Newburg Tennis Club. He gave back to the community by volunteering to teach youth how to play tennis and assisting with the Special Olympics.

Willie was also a member of the Louisville Urban League Guild whose mission is to unite, strengthen and support the Louisville Urban League and it’s endeavors with volunteerism

and

community service.

Willie was genuinely a “people person.” He had a bigger than life personality, never met a stranger and made others laugh with his crazy sense of humor! When meeting someone

new for

the first time, he might be asked, “Who are you?” In response, he’d throw them off guard by

answering, “Well, you can call me Mr. Jackson!” It was his way of breaking the ice. He has touched the lives of many young people. When out in public, he’d often run into former

students

and was always greeted with a cheerful “Hello Mr. Jackson or Coach Jackson!” Many of them

would let him know how much they appreciated him as a teacher/mentor or let him know

what a difference he had made in their lives. He officially retired in 2015 but continued to work as a Substitute Teacher until 2020.

Willie was married to his loving wife, Shirley, for 36 years. She is a former teacher, counselor and principal in the Jefferson County Public School System. In their retirement, they enjoyed traveling, attending social and sports events and dining out together.

Willie is preceded in death by his parents, Annie Pearl and Hezekiah Jackson; sisters, Annie Grant and Loubbertha Pfiefer; brother, Phillip Sellers and daughter, Valencia Michelle Jackson.

He leaves to mourn his wife, Shirley Fuqua-Jackson; daughter, Tara Smith (Tamp, FL); six grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren (Tampa, FL); four sisters: Gleasine Williams,

Annie Wren, Eddie Mae Bandy Anderson (Birmingham, AL), Rhonda Faye Jones (Anthony)

Sumter, SC and brother, Robert Jackson (Louisville, KY); and a host of nieces, nephews, family and friends.

In memory of Willie Jackson donations can be made to Simmons College of Kentucky. Services will be live stream Via: Facebook and YouTube

Cemetery

Highland Memory Gardens

279 Landis Ln.

Mt. Washington, KY, 40047

Events

JAN **Visitation** 09:00AM - 11:00AM

21

St Stephen Church

1018 So. 15th St., Louisville, KY, US, 40210

JAN **Service** 11:00AM

21

St Stephen Church

1018 So. 15th St., Louisville, KY, US, 40210

Comments



“ Can remember watching Hobo play basket ball at Morehead State while we attended there. He was a great ball player. Our Sympathy, Coach and Linda

coach and linda Fisher - February 05 at 08:40 PM



“ What a wonderful human being! I know he's in Heaven given God that big smile of his! R.I.P. Hobo. You will be missed. Prayers for his family.

Debbie Tony Smallwood - January 21 at 12:25 PM



“ Coach Jackson was a wonderful man with a good heart and a knack for instilling pride, hope and confidence in the students of Western High School; especially the athletes. As a coach he was inspirational bar none and as a colleague he was always supportive and freely shared his wise counsel. I will always remember his warm smile that was as large as his stature. I am blessed for having his path cross my life.

Rita Robinson-Secession - January 21 at 08:44 AM



“ Well I remember Hobo our softball at Hill Street Missionary Baptist church he was our coach he would holla at us and everything but we were a good girls softball team won plenty of Championship, I never forget HoBo, he was also a big brother to the Pumphrey family he asked my mother Miss Clara B. Pumphrey to stand up for him as his mother at his wedding we will always be close to him and I just want to say to a Shirley I'm praying for you and may God bless you and comfort you and the rest of the family love you.

Minister Cheryl M. Pumphrey

Minister Cheryl M Pumphrey - January 20 at 09:51 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Willie "Hobo" David Jackson.



January 20 at 11:54 AM



“ What a man, what a man, what a mighty good man. Whenever I ran into him, that infectious smile was welcoming.
To my Soror Shirley, we are praying God's peace for you and your family. Sending our love and sympathy.
Al and Yolanda G Green

Yolanda Graham Green - January 19 at 10:58 PM



“ Loved seeing Shirley and Willie at Church and in community. That smile will be missed!

Janice Baldon-Gutter - January 19 at 12:31 AM



“ Shirley and Family,
Brian and I are so sorry for your loss. Our deepest condolences and we are praying that the good Lord protect you and give you comfort.

Brian and Vicky Jobe

Vicky Green-Jobe - January 23 at 12:03 AM



“ A Giant in many ways through his Accomplishments and Charity in life, but what I always saw most in my Friend was His Giant Heart! Even with that Giant Heart he still challenged all in his world to "Do For Yourself and Don't Ask For Help Unless You Really Need It." May God give Shirley and the family Peace and Perseverance to get to the other side of this. I will truly miss my friend.....Mikeal Pinkard & Family

Mikeal Pinkard - January 18 at 11:21 AM



“ As a fellow classmate and alumni of Morehead State University, I was continually amazed by Hobo's athletic and academic ability. His smile was magnetic and his love of life was contagious. My sincerest and heartfelt sympathy to the family of a good, and great man.

Dr. John Wm. Roberts
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Dr. John Wm. Roberts - January 18 at 10:10 AM



“ I've officiated many of coach Jackson games...always a pleasant and kind soul. I looked forward ALWAYS working his games!(can't say that for most). It made me sad to see his bright and uplifting smile in the obituary. What a truly class act, and man who wouldn't be afraid to talk about GOD, and one I'm heart broken to see leave us behind. But now...he is truly beginning his true life, one which will be with GOD for eternity!
I'm blessed to have made acquaintance with you coach! Looking forward to seeing you again soon

Official of high school athletics - January 17 at 02:57 PM



“ My condolences and Prayers to family ,may your love one now R.I.P., just remember, your love one is not GONE, he is JUST AWAY !

Lynn Hall - January 18 at 04:13 PM



“ Care and Compassion Spray was purchased for the family of Willie "Hobo" David Jackson.



January 17 at 11:22 AM



“ When I first saw this guy, I said that I was a retired JCPS administrator, and he said to me call me "Mr. Jackson," and said "okay"! Then I said, to him, "call me, Lieutenant Colonel, retired U.S.Army, and the Vietnam War is over". I asked, "did you serve 22 years in the army?" He looked at me and said, "you"? Every time after that I would see him at social events and Franco's on Dixie Highway, where at the round table he and his buddies would gather to discuss the issues of the world and Louisville and whatever else was occurring. It was always great seeing "Big Jack".What was achieved is a different issue. We are together in Christ. Just a great man and to his lovely, wife, Shirley. Mr. Jack was a great man.
Titus H. Exum.

Titus Exum - January 16 at 05:05 PM



“ Mr. Jackson was a major part of my daughter's life encouraging her to give her all to her sport and encouraging her to build that self-confidence that she needed. He made a difference in so many lives.

Elsie Medlin - January 16 at 10:32 AM



“ To Shirley and Family: Although words cannot begin to ease the sorrow of your loss. Please know that there are so many who care. May GOD'S Promise of Eternal Life and the Memories of Your Loved One Bring You Comfort and Peace...William I.Taylor Jr.,St.Stephen Baptist Church Greeter.

William Taylor - January 15 at 11:17 PM



“ What a great human being. I was his friend and teammate, and he was mine. You will be missed. Rest in peace my friend. Prayers for the family, Butch and Diane Avis.

Butch Avis - January 15 at 12:47 PM



“ Hobby is what we called him in college. He was thoughtful, happy go lucky and a serious basketball player.

Mary Touray - January 15 at 02:25 PM



“ What a kind and gentle person we mourn. Sending Shirley and the entire family our sorrow and condolences . Last saw this beautiful couple in Washington, DC for the Morehead State University reunion in 2018. What a joyful time we all had in recovering old memories. May our friend, Hobo, “Rest In Peace “. Your University Friends, William Calvin Settles and Michal Foriest Settles. 1/18/22

William Settles - January 19 at 07:35 PM



“ “Rest in peace”. I didn't know you well but I liked you instantly when I become one of your softball teammates. After reading your obituary I realized why I instantly liked you....you were a hell of a man!

Ray Beaufait

Ray Beaufait - January 15 at 11:24 AM



“ Hobo was my friend he coached my son Andre at Western and became his mentor, he always checked on Andre and we often had lunch together at Franco's at the round table. Hobo was a Godly man and he let his light shine so others could see Christ in him. My prayers and condolences to the family. James & Victoria Ziegler

James ziegler - January 14 at 03:46 PM



“ Willie was one of my teachers in 7th grade at Russell Jr High. He was so likable and made an impression on me at that time. Who knew he would later in life marry my sister and become my brother-in-law! My mom loved him from the very beginning too. He teased and made her laugh so very often. And he loved her sweet potato pies so needless to say she always had one especially for him at all holiday dinners! I know my sister will miss him so much, but so shall everyone who knew him. RIP Willie and I know you will!

jackie fuqua saffel - January 14 at 03:07 PM



“ . I am so saddened by Willie's passing! Willie and I rode from the Athletic Dorm to the main campus together many times at MSU! I love this guy and my baseball brothers at MSU loved him too! We were big fans at the basketball games watching our guy, Hobo Jackson, out there giving it his all! Willie was a crowd favorite and loved by all! I was fortunate to get to have lunch with Willie and a few other MSU graduates a few years ago in Louisville at Darrell Griffith's restaurant! In our photo, Willie has his hand on my shoulder! As I looked at that picture with he and I their, I teared up and sob for a moment! And then, Willie's big smile came to me and I was ok! I will always cherish knowing Willie and he will live in my heart forever!!! I love you Willie! Bruce Gentry

Bruce Gentry - January 14 at 01:10 PM



“ Will always carry good memories of you Coach Jackson. Rest In Peace.

Billy Groaning - January 18 at 12:56 PM



“ What a wonderful human being. Always had a big smile on his face. I had the pleasure of playing softball with Hobo! R.I.P. Prayers to his family!!

Debbie and Tony Smallwood - January 14 at 11:23 AM



“ I remember a long, lanky kid from the 'Ham as he walked across the "yard" at Morehead State College. He also played basketball and stood out on the basketball court, with his friend, also from the "Ham," Bruce King.

Those were the fun days when we could laugh a lot and tease each other without anyone's feelings getting hurt. Those were the days, and as Smokey Robinson would say, "I'll miss you my buddy. I'll miss you my friend." Until we meet again, rest in peace "BO." Shirley, stay blessed and may God keep His arms around you during this time of sadness.

Helen Edmondson-Johnson - January 13 at 07:11 PM



“ Prayers and blessings to the family of Willie Jackson. I am so very sorry for your loss.
Much love, Diane.

Diane Whitlock - January 13 at 05:14 PM



“ Our most sincere condolences go out to Shirley and the rest of Coach Jackson's family. We called him "Coach" because he was my daughter's basketball coach at Seneca High School. I met Coach Jackson in my Sunday school class at Hill Street Baptist Church. After he find out my daughter was a basketball player, he left no stone left unturned until he got her at Seneca. I can't tell you how much he poured into our daughter while under his coaching. He was funny, strict, but fair when it came to coaching. He was one heck of a mentor for our daughter and I feel privileged to call him our friend. Take your rest Coach Jackson and we'll see you soon.

Rhonda Anderson - January 13 at 09:43 AM



“ To Shirley and Family, My precious memory was being at the Baptist Church in Morehead Kentucky and seeing Hobo be baptized. With his tall height, he sat in a chair to be baptized. He was such an outstanding basketball star at MSU yet humble and friendly to everyone. May God bless you and give you comfort. Rest in peace, dear classmate.

Janice Crumes James

Janice C James - January 12 at 10:10 PM



“ “Hobo” as he was known to all at Morehead State was a gentleman and well liked—he was junior when I came to Morehead and welcomed all of us with that beautiful smile—my condolences to the family and may God comfort you in the days to come.

Harriett Mosby Pennington - January 13 at 11:10 AM



“ Rest well you good and faithful servant. You will be missed, your laughter, and the cutting up and joking. you leave a void in many people lives that knew you. Shirley you have my condolences may god be with you and give you peace. Brenda Dudley

Brenda - January 15 at 07:52 PM



“ A great man, he was my favorite PE teacher, loved him , I know he will be missed , rest in peace

Steve Thieneman - January 16 at 12:12 PM



“ Hobo took the lead in "race relations" back when we were both students at Morehead State. His smile alone broke down lots of stereotypes of all them angry, threatening Black men. He had a terrific personality that carried him his whole life. I'll miss seeing you at Franco's, Hobo!

Don Ray Smith - January 20 at 09:32 AM